

Serial No. 10/709,973

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15XZ6137(GEMS 0242 PA)

In the Specification:Please Amend Paragraph [0021] To Read As Follows:

In an alternate embodiment, the thermo generating element 26 may take the form of a radiolucent cover 34 surrounding the imaging detector bucky 16 or at a minimum the patient exposure surface 20 (see Figure 3). A wide variety of heating components may be included in the radiolucent cover 34 provided they pose no interference with the imaging signal x-rays (hence radiolucent). It is contemplated that some heating assemblies may only be radiolucent when inactive. In such embodiments, it is again contemplated that the logic 24 be adapted to inactivate the radiolucent cover 34 prior to activation of the gantry 14. Thus the patient exposure surface 20 may again be maintained at the proper body temperature (or slightly warmer) without generating imaging interference. As the compression paddle 22 also makes contact with the patient, it is desirable to warm it as well. The present invention addresses this without the need for additional thermo generating elements 26 by moving the compression paddle 22 between a warming position 36 (see Figure 4) where it is in thermal communication with the patient exposure surface 20 and an imaging position 38 where it is positioned remote from the patient exposure surface 20 to allow for patient positioning. In this fashion, a single thermal element 26 can warm both elements 20,22. Additionally, as the compression paddle 22 is in thermal communication with the patient exposure surface 20, the surfaces will be at similar temperatures and the sensors 28 act to report the similar temperatures. This acts to allow a single logic 24 to control both temperatures. In one embodiment, it is contemplated that the logic 24 be adapted to move the compression paddle 22 into communication with the patient exposure surface 20 and then into the imaging position 38 once a suitable temperature has been maintained. It should be understood that the thermal element 26 may also be configured to surround the surfaces similar to Figure 4 while operating in the fashion described in Figure 5. In this fashion, a non-radiolucent cover may both surround the paddle and be automatically removed.